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Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family

Report of the Third Committee

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I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 19 September 2003, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-eighth session the item entitled "Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family" and to allocate it to the Third Committee.

2. The Third Committee considered the item at its 2nd to 6th, 10th, 19th, 23rd, 28th, 34th, 48th and 58th meetings, from 6 to 8, and on 14, 21, 23 and 30 October and 6, 17 and 26 November 2003. At its 2nd to 6th meetings, the Committee held a general discussion on item 106 jointly with items 105 and 107. An account of the Committee's discussion is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.3/58/SR.2-6, 10, 19, 23, 28, 34, 48 and 58).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Relevant chapter of the report of the Economic and Social Council;[1]

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the review and appraisal of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons (A/58/61-E/2003/5);

(c) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report on the preparations for the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004 (A/58/67-E/2003/49);

[1] See A/58/3 (Part II); for the final text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/58/3/Rev.1).

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(d) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the World Youth Report 2003 (A/58/79);

(e) Report on the World Social Situation, 2003 (A/58/153, Rev.1);

(f) Report of the Secretary-General on cooperatives in social development (A/58/159);

(g) Report of the Secretary-General on promoting youth employment (A/58/229);

(h) Letter dated 1 October 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Ministerial Declaration adopted at the twenty-seventh annual meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 and China, held at United Nations Headquarters on 25 September 2003 (A/58/413);

(i) Letter dated 12 November 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/58/594-S/2003/1090).

4. At the 2nd meeting, on 6 October, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs made a statement (see A/C.3/58/SR.2).

5. At the same meeting, the Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs made an introductory statement (see A/C.3/58/SR.2).

6. Also at the 2nd meeting, the Committee engaged in a dialogue with the above-mentioned speakers, in which the delegations of Switzerland, Egypt, the Sudan, Benin, the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen, Canada, Cuba, Algeria, Azerbaijan, the Gambia, Pakistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Qatar and Nigeria took part (see A/C.3/58/SR.2).

II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.2 and amendments thereto contained in documents A/C.3/58/L.12 and A/C.3/58/L.48

7. By its resolution 2003/10 of 21 July 2003, the Economic and Social Council recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution entitled "Preparations for and observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004". The draft resolution, reproduced in document A/C.3/58/L.2, read as follows:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolutions 44/82 of 8 December 1989, 45/133 of 14 December 1990, 46/92 of 16 December 1991, 47/237 of 20 September 1993, 50/142 of 21 December 1995, 52/81 of 12 December 1997, 54/124 of 17 December 1999, 56/113 of 19 December 2001 and 57/164 of 18 December 2002 concerning the proclamation of, preparations for and observance of the International Year of the Family in 1994 and its tenth anniversary in 2004,

"*Recognizing* that the tenth anniversary of the Year constitutes an important opportunity to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of efforts at

all levels to carry out specific programmes within the framework of the objectives of the Year,

"*Recognizing also* that 2004 is to be viewed as a target year by which time concrete achievements will have been produced with respect to identifying and elaborating issues of direct concern to families and mechanisms will have been set up to plan and coordinate activities by the appropriate governmental and non-governmental bodies and agencies,

"*Emphasizing* that equality between women and men and respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all family members are essential to family well-being and to society at large, noting the importance of reconciliation of work and family life and recognizing the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child,

"*Noting with satisfaction* the close collaboration of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations active in the family field, as well as its research efforts and preparations for the tenth anniversary of the Year,

"*Appreciating* the active role of the regional commissions in the preparatory process of the tenth anniversary, particularly in facilitating regional cooperation in that regard,

"*Recalling* that one plenary meeting will be devoted at its fifty-ninth session, in 2004, to the observance of the tenth anniversary of the Year, building upon the events to be held on 15 May 2004 on the occasion of the International Day of Families,

"1. *Encourages* Governments to make every possible effort to realize the objectives of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and to integrate a family perspective in the planning process;

"2. *Recalls* its invitation to all States to set the end of 2003 as a target date for finalizing a programme for the observance of the tenth anniversary of the Year;

"3. *Also recalls* its invitation to Governments that had not already done so to set up national coordinating committees or similar mechanisms, as appropriate, for the anniversary, and invites them, as well as the Governments of countries with existing bodies responsible for preparations and observance, to intensify preparatory measures already under way;

"4. *Recommends* that all relevant actors, including Governments, civil society, including relevant non-governmental organizations, and research and academic institutions, contribute to developing strategies and programmes aimed at strengthening the livelihood of families;

"5. *Encourages* United Nations agencies and bodies, including the regional commissions, as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and research and academic institutions, to work closely with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in a coordinated manner on family-related issues, inter alia, by sharing experience and findings, in recognition of their valuable role in family policy development at all levels;

"6. *Recalls* its invitation to the Secretary-General to launch the tenth anniversary of the Year early in December 2003;

"7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to it at its fifty-ninth session, through the Commission for Social Development and the Economic and Social Council, on the final preparations for the observance of the tenth anniversary of the Year at all levels."

8. At the 19th meeting, on 21 October, the representative of Benin, on behalf of Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, China, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Malawi, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Swaziland, Timor-Leste and Tunisia, introduced amendments (A/C.3/58/L.12) to the draft resolution. At the same meeting, Egypt, Ghana, Madagascar, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, Yemen and Zimbabwe joined in sponsoring the amendments, by which:

(a) Two new paragraphs would be inserted after operative paragraph 1, reading:

"*Welcomes* the decision of the Government of Benin to host a regional preparatory conference in Benin in May 2004 in collaboration with the United Nations;

"*Calls* for the hosting of similar conferences in other regions of the world";

(b) A new operative paragraph would be inserted after operative paragraph 5, reading:

"*Calls upon* the United Nations system, the United Nations agencies and bodies, including the regional commissions, as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and research and academic institutions to contribute to the success of the regional conference";

(c) Operative paragraph 6 would be replaced by:

"*Requests* the Secretary-General to launch the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family on 4 December 2003";

(d) A new operative paragraph would be inserted after operative paragraph 6, reading:

"*Requests* the Secretary-General to staff and strengthen the family unit in consideration of the celebration of the International Year of the Family and beyond and of the family-related dimensions of the Millennium Development Goals."

9. At the 48th meeting, on 17 November, the representative of Benin, on behalf of Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, China, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, the Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Indonesia, Kenya, Lesotho, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Qatar, the Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, the Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United

States of America, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe, introduced amendments (A/C.3/58/L.48) to the draft resolution, by which:

(a) Two new paragraphs would be inserted after operative paragraph 1, reading:

"*Welcomes* the decision of Benin to host a regional preparatory conference in Benin in May 2004 in collaboration with the United Nations, within existing resources;

"*Welcomes* decisions by members of the international community (Governments, non-governmental organizations, civil society) to host events in observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family";

(b) A new operative paragraph would be inserted after operative paragraph 5, reading:

"*Calls upon* United Nations agencies and bodies, including the regional commissions, within existing resources, and invites intergovernmental organizations and research and academic institutions to support regional events of the year 2004 to contribute to the success of those events";

(c) Operative paragraph 6 would be replaced by:

"*Welcomes* the launching by the Secretary-General of the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family on 4 December 2003";

(d) A new operative paragraph would be inserted after operative paragraph 6, reading:

"*Requests* the Secretary-General:

"(a) To strengthen the programme of work of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on family pursuant to the objectives of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in the context of national family-related provisions of the outcomes of the United Nations conferences and summits, and in the context of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, to enhance the unique role of the family in society, in particular through:

"(i) Developing and strengthening a family-focused perspective in relevant policies and programmes of United Nations bodies as well as in the follow-up to the outcomes of the relevant United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields;

"(ii) Provision of policy guidance on emerging issues and trends affecting the family, through preparation of studies and research papers aimed in particular at enhancing the role of the family in society;

"(iii) Provision of technical assistance to countries, upon request, to enhance, where appropriate, their national capacities in the area of family-related work;

"(b) To address family issues, where relevant, in his report on the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields";

(e) Operative paragraph 7 would be replaced by:

"*Requests* the Secretary-General to submit an interim report to the Commission on Social Development at its forty-second session and a substantive report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session on the implementation of the present resolution and on the preparations for and the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family at all levels".

10. In introducing the amendments, the representative of Benin orally revised them as follows:

(a) A new paragraph would be inserted between the first and second new paragraphs (see para. 9 (a) above), reading:

"*Also welcomes* the decision of the State of Qatar to host an international conference to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in November 2004";

(b) In the second new paragraph (see para. 9 (a) above), the words "*Welcomes* decisions by" would be replaced by the words "*Further welcomes* decisions by".

11. Subsequently, Armenia, the Comoros, Haiti, Morocco, Namibia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago and Uganda joined in sponsoring the amendments contained in document A/C.3/58/L.48, as orally revised.

12. Also at the 48th meeting, the representative of Benin withdrew the amendments contained in document A/C.3/58/L.12.

13. At the 58th meeting, on 26 November, the Secretary of the Committee read out a statement regarding financial provisions relating to the draft resolution, as amended by document A/C.3/58/L.48, as orally revised.

14. At the same meeting, the representative of Benin further orally revised the amendments by changing the order of the paragraphs of the draft resolution.

15. Also at the 58th meeting, the Committee adopted the amendments contained in document A/C.3/58/L.48, as orally revised.

16. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.2, as amended by document A/C.3/58/L.48, as orally revised, without a vote (see para. 18).

17. The representative of Benin made a statement (see A/C.3/58/SR.58).

III. Recommendation of the Third Committee

18. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Preparations for and observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 44/82 of 8 December 1989, 45/133 of 14 December 1990, 46/92 of 16 December 1991, 47/237 of 20 September 1993, 50/142 of 21 December

1995, 52/81 of 12 December 1997, 54/124 of 17 December 1999, 56/113 of 19 December 2001 and 57/164 of 18 December 2002 concerning the proclamation of, preparations for and observance of the International Year of the Family in 1994 and its tenth anniversary in 2004,

Recognizing that the tenth anniversary of the Year constitutes an important opportunity to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of efforts at all levels to carry out specific programmes within the framework of the objectives of the Year,

Recognizing also that 2004 is to be viewed as a target year by which time concrete achievements will have been produced with respect to identifying and elaborating issues of direct concern to families and mechanisms will have been set up to plan and coordinate activities by the appropriate governmental and non-governmental bodies and agencies,

Emphasizing that equality between women and men and respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all family members are essential to family well-being and to society at large, noting the importance of reconciliation of work and family life, and recognizing the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child,

Noting with satisfaction the close collaboration of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations active in the family field, as well as its research efforts and preparations for the tenth anniversary of the Year,

Appreciating the active role of the regional commissions in the preparatory process of the tenth anniversary, particularly in facilitating regional cooperation in that regard,

Recalling that one plenary meeting will be devoted at its fifty-ninth session, in 2004, to the observance of the tenth anniversary of the Year, building upon the events to be held on 15 May 2004 on the occasion of the International Day of Families,

1. *Welcomes* the decision of Benin to host a regional preparatory conference in Benin in May 2004 in collaboration with the United Nations, within existing resources;

2. *Also welcomes* the decision of the State of Qatar to host an international conference to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in November 2004;

3. *Welcomes* the launching by the Secretary-General of the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family on 4 December 2003;

4. *Further welcomes* decisions by members of the international community (Governments, non-governmental organizations, civil society) to host events in observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family;

5. *Encourages* Governments to make every possible effort to realize the objectives of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and to integrate a family perspective in the planning process;

6. *Recalls* its invitation to all States to set the end of 2003 as a target date for finalizing a programme for the observance of the tenth anniversary of the Year;

7. *Also recalls* its invitation to Governments that had not already done so to set up national coordinating committees or similar mechanisms, as appropriate, for the anniversary, and invites them, as well as the Governments of countries with existing

bodies responsible for preparations and observance, to intensify preparatory measures already under way;

8. *Recommends* that all relevant actors — Governments, civil society, including relevant non-governmental organizations, and research and academic institutions — contribute to developing strategies and programmes aimed at strengthening the livelihood of families;

9. *Encourages* United Nations agencies and bodies, including the regional commissions, as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and research and academic institutions, to work closely with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in a coordinated manner on family-related issues, inter alia, by sharing experience and findings, in recognition of their valuable role in family policy development at all levels;

10. *Calls upon* United Nations agencies and bodies, including the regional commissions, within existing resources, and invites intergovernmental organizations and research and academic institutions to support regional events of the year 2004 to contribute to the success of those events;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To strengthen the programme of work of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on family pursuant to the objectives of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in the context of national family-related provisions of the outcomes of the United Nations conferences and summits, and in the context of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, to enhance the unique role of the family in society, in particular through:

(i) Developing and strengthening a family-focused perspective in relevant policies and programmes of United Nations bodies as well as in the follow-up to the outcomes of the relevant United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields;

(ii) Provision of policy guidance on emerging issues and trends affecting the family, through preparation of studies and research papers aimed in particular at enhancing the role of the family in society;

(iii) Provision of technical assistance to countries, upon request, to enhance, where appropriate, their national capacities in the area of family-related work;

(b) To address family issues, where relevant, in his report on the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit an interim report to the Commission on Social Development at its forty-second session and a substantive report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session on the implementation of the present resolution and on the preparations for and the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family at all levels.